

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1707

To increase housing, awareness, and navigation demonstration services
(HANDS) for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 25, 2009

Ms. GRANGER (for herself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To increase housing, awareness, and navigation demonstration services (HANDS) for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Helping Housing,
5 Awareness, and Navigation Demonstration Services for
6 Individuals With Autism Spectrum Disorders Act of
7 2009” or the “Helping HANDS for Autism Act of 2009”.

1 **TITLE I—AUTISM NAVIGATOR**
2 **PROGRAM**

3 **SEC. 101. AUTISM NAVIGATOR PROGRAM.**

4 Part R of title III of the Public Health Service Act
5 (42 U.S.C. 280i et seq.) is amended by inserting after sec-
6 tion 399DD the following:

7 **“SEC. 399DD–1. AUTISM NAVIGATOR PROGRAM.**

8 “(a) AUTHORIZATION OF GRANT PROGRAM.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordina-
10 tion with the Secretary of Housing and Urban De-
11 velopment and the Secretary of Education, shall es-
12 tablish a demonstration grant program to award
13 grants to eligible entities to enable such entities to
14 develop an autism navigator program to create a
15 more efficient, effective, coordinated use of the
16 health, housing, education, and social service sys-
17 tems for individuals with an autism spectrum dis-
18 order.

19 “(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—

20 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the
21 term ‘eligible entity’ means subject to subpara-
22 graph (B), an entity that has—

23 “(i) not less than 2 years experience
24 serving the autism community in an advo-
25 cacy or service capacity; and

1 “(ii) a—

2 “(I) behaviorist with at least a
3 master’s degree on staff or in a con-
4 sultation capacity who has experience
5 in applied behavioral analysis;

6 “(II) Board Certified Behavior
7 Analyst on staff;

8 “(III) special educator with
9 training in autism spectrum disorders
10 on staff;

11 “(IV) rehabilitation professional
12 with training in autism spectrum dis-
13 orders on staff; or

14 “(V) master’s level professional
15 with training in autism spectrum dis-
16 orders on staff.

17 “(B) SECRETARY’S DETERMINATION.—
18 Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Sec-
19 retary may determine who qualifies as an eligi-
20 ble entity under this section.

21 “(b) APPLICATION FOR A GRANT.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that de-
23 sires a grant under this section shall submit an ap-
24 plication to the Secretary at such time, in such man-
25 ner and form, and containing such information,

1 agreements, and assurances as the Secretary deter-
2 mines to be necessary to carry out this section.

3 “(2) OUTREACH SERVICES.—An application
4 submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain an as-
5 surance that the applicant will provide ongoing out-
6 reach activities while receiving a grant under this
7 section, in a manner that is culturally competent for
8 the population served, to inform the public and the
9 specific community that the autism navigator is
10 serving, of the services under the grant.

11 “(c) DEVELOPMENT OF AUTISM NAVIGATOR PRO-
12 GRAM.—

13 “(1) AUTISM NAVIGATORS.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
15 determine the functions of autism navigators
16 under this section.

17 “(B) TYPES OF FUNCTIONS.—The func-
18 tions of an autism navigator under this section
19 may include—

20 “(i) with respect to an individual with
21 an autism spectrum disorder and such in-
22 dividual’s family—

23 “(I) coordinating and scheduling
24 appointments and referrals, commu-
25 nity outreach, assistance with trans-

1 portation, housing or education ar-
2 rangements, and assistance with in-
3 surance issues and other barriers to
4 care;

5 “(II) case management and psy-
6 chosocial assessment and care or in-
7 formation and referral to such serv-
8 ices;

9 “(III) contact and care coordina-
10 tion of health care, including psycho-
11 social assessment and care, and other
12 community services, provider referrals,
13 financial support and service coordi-
14 nation, including transportation, hous-
15 ing, and education;

16 “(IV) determining coverage
17 under health insurance and health
18 plans for all services;

19 “(V) aiding with health insurance
20 coverage issues; and

21 “(VI) ensuring the initiation,
22 continuation, or sustained access to
23 care prescribed by the individual’s
24 health care providers;

1 “(ii) facilitating partnerships within
2 the health care and advocacy community to
3 assist outreach to the underserved autism
4 community;

5 “(iii) notifying individuals and their
6 families as to autism clinical trials and, on
7 request, facilitating enrollment of eligible
8 individuals;

9 “(iv) anticipating, identifying, and
10 helping individuals with an autism spec-
11 trum disorder overcome barriers in access-
12 ing and securing appropriate services in a
13 timely manner;

14 “(v) coordinating with State depart-
15 ments responsible for human services, edu-
16 cation, health and senior services, housing,
17 community affairs, and labor in providing
18 services to individuals with an autism spec-
19 trum disorder and their families;

20 “(vi) identifying caregiver supports
21 for those caring for individuals with an au-
22 tism spectrum disorder, including men-
23 toring, support groups, community re-
24 sources, and legal consultation;

1 “(vii) identifying, mentoring, and sup-
2 porting culturally sensitive caregivers of in-
3 dividuals with an autism spectrum dis-
4 order; and

5 “(viii) serving as a reliable, expert re-
6 source for advice, support, and direction to
7 access early intervention services under
8 part C of the Individuals with Disabilities
9 Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.),
10 health insurance (public or private), hous-
11 ing programs, financial security programs,
12 Medicare services under title XVIII of the
13 Social Security Act, and Medicaid services
14 under title XIX of the Social Security Act.

15 “(2) DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that
17 receives a grant under this section shall develop
18 an autism navigator program that will recruit,
19 employ, train, assign, and supervise autism
20 navigators.

21 “(B) DURATION OF GRANTS.—A grant
22 provided under this section shall be—

23 “(i) for a period of not more than 5
24 years; and

1 “(ii) subject to annual approval by the
2 Secretary and subject to the availability of
3 appropriations for the fiscal year involved.

4 “(C) NO LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF
5 GRANTS.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be
6 construed to limit the number of grants that
7 may be made to an eligible entity.

8 “(3) OUTREACH.—An autism navigator pro-
9 gram developed under paragraph (2) shall reach out
10 to appropriate physician offices and treatment cen-
11 ters to encourage such physicians and centers, re-
12 spectively, to refer individuals with an autism spec-
13 trum disorder to such program, which will offer au-
14 tism navigation services described in this subsection.

15 “(4) TRAINING AND PREPARATION.—An autism
16 navigator program developed under paragraph (2)
17 shall train and prepare autism navigators as follows:

18 “(A) Autism navigators shall have direct
19 knowledge of the communities they serve and
20 provide services to such communities in a cul-
21 turally competent manner.

22 “(B) Autism navigators shall be informed
23 about health insurance systems and other com-
24 munity services, and be able to aid individuals
25 in resolving access issues.

1 “(C) Autism navigators shall have direct
2 knowledge of the unique needs of individuals
3 with an autism spectrum disorder and the cur-
4 rent evidence-based practices that are available
5 to such individuals through Federal programs
6 and in the State involved.

7 “(5) MANAGING CARE.—An autism navigator
8 program developed under paragraph (2) shall assign
9 autism navigators, in accordance with applicable cri-
10 teria of the Secretary, for—

11 “(A) managing the care of individuals with
12 an autism spectrum disorder; and

13 “(B) assisting such individuals and fami-
14 lies of such individuals with navigating the life
15 service continuum.

16 “(6) CENTRALIZED ACCESS.—An autism navi-
17 gator program developed under paragraph (2) shall
18 provide centralized access for individuals with an au-
19 tism spectrum disorder to multiple Federal and
20 State activities and programs related to autism spec-
21 trum disorders, including such activities and pro-
22 grams carried out by—

23 “(A) the Administration for Children and
24 Families;

1 “(B) the Centers for Disease Control and
2 Prevention;

3 “(C) the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid
4 Services;

5 “(D) the Collaborative Programs of Excel-
6 lence in Autism;

7 “(E) the Department of Health and
8 Human Services;

9 “(F) the Health Resources and Services
10 Administration;

11 “(G) the Interagency Autism Coordinating
12 Committee;

13 “(H) the National Institutes of Health;

14 “(I) the National Institute of Mental
15 Health;

16 “(J) the Studies to Advance Autism Re-
17 search and Treatment;

18 “(K) the Department of Housing and
19 Urban Development;

20 “(L) the Department of Education; and

21 “(M) the Department of Labor.

22 “(7) DATA COLLECTION AND REPORT.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Each recipient of a
24 grant under this section shall—

1 “(i) collect specific autism data that
2 records navigation services provided to
3 each individual served by the autism navi-
4 gator program; and

5 “(ii) establish and implement proce-
6 dures and protocols, consistent with appli-
7 cable Federal and State laws, to ensure the
8 confidentiality of all information shared by
9 a participant in the program, the partici-
10 pant’s personal representative, and the
11 participant’s health care providers, group
12 health plans, or health insurance insurers.

13 “(B) DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.—A
14 recipient of a grant under this section may,
15 consistent with applicable Federal and State
16 confidentiality laws, collect, use, or disclose ag-
17 gregate information that is not individually
18 identifiable.

19 “(C) REPORT.—Each recipient of a grant
20 under this section shall submit an annual report
21 to the Secretary that—

22 “(i) summarizes and analyzes the
23 data collected under subparagraph (A)(i);
24 and

1 “(ii) provides information on needs for
2 navigation services, types of access difficul-
3 ties resolved, sources of repeated resolu-
4 tion, and flaws in the system of access, in-
5 cluding insurance barriers.

6 “(d) EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary shall provide, di-
7 rectly or through grants or contracts, for evaluations to
8 determine the effects of the services of autism navigators.

9 “(e) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS.—The
10 Secretary shall coordinate the demonstration grant pro-
11 gram authorized under this section with programs author-
12 ized under the Children’s Health Act of 2000 (Public Law
13 106–310), the Combating Autism Act of 2006 (Public
14 Law 109–416), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.
15 701 et seq.), the Medicaid home- and community-based
16 service waivers program under section 1915(c) of the So-
17 cial Security Act, title XIX of the Social Security Act, and
18 other appropriate programs.

19 “(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
20 tion shall be construed to require payment for navigation
21 services or to require payment for other services in cases
22 where such other services are provided free of charge.”.

1 **TITLE II—AUTISM AWARENESS**

2 **SEC. 201. TRAINING OF FIRST RESPONDERS IN THE REC-**
3 **OGNITION OF AUTISM.**

4 (a) DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM.—The Sec-
5 retary of Health and Human Services, in coordination
6 with the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and
7 Prevention and in consultation with the heads of other ap-
8 propriate Federal agencies, shall develop, demonstrate,
9 and disseminate a standard curriculum for the training
10 of first responders in assisting individuals (and their fami-
11 lies) with autism and other cognitive behavioral disabilities
12 during potential and actual emergencies.

13 (b) TRAINING GRANTS.—The Secretary of Health
14 and Human Services, in coordination with the Director of
15 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and in
16 consultation with the heads of other appropriate Federal
17 agencies, shall award grants to States and local govern-
18 ments to train first responders (including the police, fire
19 departments, emergency medical technicians, and other
20 paid or volunteer first responders) in providing assistance
21 to individuals with autism and other cognitive impair-
22 ments in potential and actual emergency situations.

23 (c) REQUIREMENT.—Training carried out under this
24 section shall inform first responders of the risks associated
25 with autism and other cognitive behavioral disabilities, as

1 well as provide instruction in appropriate autism recogni-
2 tion and response techniques.

3 **TITLE III—HOME OF THEIR OWN**

4 **SEC. 301. HOME OF THEIR OWN.**

5 (a) TASK FORCE.—Not later than 90 days after the
6 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Hous-
7 ing and Urban Development shall convene a task force
8 comprised of appropriate national and State autism advo-
9 cacy groups, recipients of funds from the Department of
10 Housing and Urban Development for housing for adults
11 with an autism spectrum disorder, and community-based
12 organizations that serve adults with an autism spectrum
13 disorder.

14 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM.—The
15 task force described in subsection (a) shall establish a
16 housing demonstration grant program to award grants to
17 entities (including States, localities, public and private
18 partnerships, and community nonprofit and for-profit or-
19 ganizations) to enable such entities to provide a housing
20 program for adults with an autism spectrum disorder,
21 with the goal of providing individualized housing and serv-
22 ices to such adults.

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